

URBANA CITY COUNCIL
‘SPECIAL MEETING’ MINUTES – AUGUST 8, 2012

Council President Marty Hess called the Urbana City Council ‘Special Meeting’ of Wednesday, August 8, 2012, to order at 7:00PM in Court Chambers / The Municipal Building.

All of Council were present. City Staff in attendance included: Mayor Bill Bean; Mr. Kerry Brugger, Director of Administration; and Mr. Doug Crabill, Assistant to the Director of Administration. Others (as reflected on the sign-in sheet) : Ms. Kathy Fox, *The Urbana Citizen*; Mr. Matt Sanctis, *The Springfield News-Sun*, Ms. Nora McCain, and Mr. Richard McCain.

Following the Roll Call and Pledge of Allegiance, Council President Hess introduced the featured discussion topic, “Recycling Proposal.” He noted that 5 Council Members had signed to request this Special Meeting.

“I’ve never done a Special Meeting like this...” Council President Hess said, prior to reading the following Board of Control item:

The Board of Control recommends Council authorize the Director of Administration to enter into a three year contract (beginning September 1, 2012) with Waste Management of Ohio, Inc. for the residential recycling program. The cost per residential unit will be \$3.18 per month for the contract duration. This contract is renewable for up to two additional years at the same cost. This is a decrease in the cost from the \$3.62 per month that is charged under the current contract. The monthly cost to the city will be \$11,448. (based on 3,600 residential units). This is the lowest and best of three bids received (See Attached). This will be paid from the Recycling Fund from revenues collected from residential utility billing accounts, and is in the 2012 Budget.

Mr. Dwight Paul moved to reconsider the Board of Control item for recycling; Mr. Al Evans seconded.

“We have had numerous discussions on this, and it’s been a pretty hot topic for the last couple weeks,” Council President Hess stated, and also invited additional comments from Council.

Mr. Larry Lokai said, “Point of order, Mr. President...before we can even discuss this, we have to decide whether we’re going to consider the motion...and then we can talk about it.”

All voted to reconsider the Board of Control item, with the exception of Mr. Lokai.

Mr. Paul presented the follow up motion to place the BOC item on the floor for discussion, and passage/acceptance; Mr. Eugene Fields seconded.

Mr. Paul said:

“Well—since this is my fault (I think) that we’re here—I’d like to take a minute just to kind of explain my thinking...I came into the first meeting convinced that changing how we were doing recycling was the right way to go...after I made my vote, I began to reconsider. Thankfully (Council, thank you for giving me a couple days to kind of mull over my reconsideration of this issue)—I came to the conclusion that \$3.18, cost certainty for 3-5 years was a plus. I began thinking in terms of—okay—if we go ahead and replace the current system, what are we going to replace it with? I came to realize that we didn’t really have a plan in place that we could roll out, and talk coherently about this...but I thought it would cause more concern and issues, if we were all giving different answers...than if we had a plan already worked out. I hope that Council over the coming (hopefully) 36 months will continue to look at recycling, and look at some alternatives for when this contract runs out...”

Mrs. Virginia Smith agreed with Mr. Paul's remarks, and said, "What changed my mind was I went out and talked to Robert's (and had a lengthy discussion with him), and after talking to him I knew he wasn't ready to take on recycling yet...and after I voted it down, I really had a bad feeling in my gut...and so I thought it over, and I called Dwight...and I said, 'I think I've made a mistake...'"

She said her talk with Robert's Refuse convinced her to go with the current plan.

In reference to the current proposal, Mrs. Smith said, "I think it is a good deal."

Mr. Lokai stated:

"I'm not going to be negative on the discussion, but I will say this—that it is in my estimation (and in other peoples' estimation) that City Government should not be in the recycling business. We should not be in the business where we're collecting money, and paying customers...or in this case, it's going to be Waste Management...if this passes 5-2, or 6-1 (whatever the vote's going to be). I'm well aware of the State guidelines (that are recommendations)—the public has been misled over the years, that they felt like this was mandated (it's not)...that the City was going to get fined (it won't), but a good point was brought up in my discussion with Mr. Brugger (and other people)...was that (you know) if we go against what the EPA says now on there...it's not a mandate...it is a recommendation...that (well maybe) they're going to have a project come up in the next 5-6 years (or 2-3 years), and the EPA's going to say, 'Okay—(well—you know) that Urbana town, they went against our recommendation...so we're not going to be so cooperative with them, and we're going to put the hammer to them.

As I looked at this—and there a 4 levels of management (if you want to call it that)—the citizens are on the bottom of the peck order (because they have to do whatever we do legislatively), then we (as the legislators) have to do what the 7 of us are listening to people...and there are a lot of people that do agree with a different system, but they're not quite as vocal...and then above that is the North Central Solid Waste District which could (if possible) get dinged (if they don't put this plan in compliance), and then of course, the EPA's over them...but there are some misleading numbers (and I would just like to point those out, so we don't have to drag this on any further). We're saying we're saving 12%—that is, a bunch of baloney! When we bid this out (years ago) it was \$3.12...in 6 months, they raised it to \$3.62 (50 cents)...what they did was to bring it back down to \$3.18, so really it's 6 cents more than it started out as a few years ago.

Secondly—and I know I'm going to get outvoted, but I've got to spell my position out here—there is a trend in the State of Ohio (and all you have to do is call every city that's recycling)...and the trend is as follows...they want you to go out, and they (the EPA) is recommending (not mandating) that you go to 1 hauler and do a complete package...and they do everything!

They also are recommending (and I've got it from Andrew Booker—he pointed that out, that I was challenged on April 10th—but I was correct), that they would like to go to the large containers...because it's cleaner, there's not as much trash floating around, etc...so that is their game plan!

I am going to be working very diligently on another plan, and get that done within the next 3 months...when we did talk to Robert's, he said--the same thing Virginia said...he's not ready right now... 'We could be, if we had to be—if we mandated to every hauler'...and I think that's what's going to have to happen, or otherwise Robert's will be out of business down the road. Robert's has made an impact on this city—they

used to have 1,400 customers when we started this program—now they have 2,200 customers! Something tells me—that the citizens of this town like the service that Robert’s offers—that’s where the choice comes in!

I did call Rumpke—they said they had an original bid of \$3.39—I sent the email to administration (I believe) that they said if they would pick up only their customers, they would only charge \$3.25...but they did not put it in as a line item...they would bundle. We’ve been paying for recycling for years with the previous haulers...so they would just put it in a bundle package, but...I’m going to be outvoted tonight, but I have to make my position very clear...that I do not think this is the best plan. I am for recycling, and whoever came up with the idea that I’m opposed to recycling has been misled...I would encourage them to call me, and I would sit down...and visit with them...but (with that) I will yield the floor to the next person, and I will work diligently with the Council in getting something changed (so we are not forced into putting this on the utility bill). I would just like to make a closing statement--we are in the business of providing services—we are not in the trash business! We should not be in the trash business, and I would like to see us get out of it (some way), and whoever provides the service pay for the recycling...and the trash collection in 1 bill (and it’s their responsibility). If you don’t pay your trash bill (and they don’t pick up your trash)—you’re then going to be in violation—that’s all I have to say.”

“After hearing his—spiel on recycling, I’m going to just...leave it where it is, and let it go on down the road...” said Mr. Robert Thorpe.

Mr. Doug Hoffman stated, “I just want to say—I’ve had a lot of feedback (positive and negative) over the decisions we’ve made. I can say (personally) I’ve had more positive around my decision, but then again...maybe it’s the people I associate with. You know—I still feel comfortable with the decision I made, and I also respect this process...and this is why there are 7 votes, and not 1...you know, people do have a right to change their mind (that’s the reason why it’s written that way), so (you know) I thought we had a better plan/comfortable...if today we go another way, we’re all in this together (and work for the city)...so it’s a vote...if we get outvoted, we move on with the plan as it is!” Council President Hess directed, “In the future—when you know something’s coming up (Mr. Brugger made it this way when he was on Council, and talked about it...and we talked about it)—make sure you get with somebody to get your opinions, and your questions asked, before it comes down to the last minute (like we did—unfortunately, this time)...it caused a little bit of headache for everybody, but...in the future, if you would do that...it would help everybody out, and make a smooth transition for everybody all the way around.”

Roll call vote to approve the Board of Control item as read: Mr. Thorpe, yes; Mr. Hoffman, no; Mr. Fields, yes; Mr. Evans, yes; Mr. Paul, yes; Mrs. Smith, yes; Mr. Lokai, no (5 – Yes to 2 – No).

Miscellaneous Business

Mr. Evans addressed a lot that needs mowing, with blue wildflowers growing in the tree lawn (corner of Water St. and Locust). Mr. Doug Crabill indicated there has been a letter sent out regarding this property.

No other Miscellaneous Business was brought forth.

Adjourn

Mr. Thorpe moved to adjourn the Special Meeting at 7:14PM; Mr. Paul seconded. All were in favor of adjournment.

Council Clerk

Council President

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G. Eldridge, UCC Clerk
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